

Official Publication of The Minnesota Transportation Museum, Inc.



MINNEGAZETTE

Post Office Box 1300, Hopkins, Minnesota 55343

Comment

WHAT PRICE PROFESSIONALISM?

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1975

About a year ago, on TRAINS Magazine's "Turntable" opinion page, the Smithsonian's John H. White decried the lack of interest by the big money people in support of the so-called "Mechanical Arts." Concluded Mr. White, "we ain't got no class."

"Excellence, especially of style or appearance . . . unique, classical." Webster's definitions support Mr. White's overview of our industry.

The tourist railway industry today has a depressing lack of professionalism among its ranks. Too many of our associates pass off to the public as "meticulously restored" or rebuilt a car or locomotive exuding gross amateurisms. I have seen mechanical work (e.g., parts fabrication) so poorly performed as to be ludicrous. The standard excuse is, "Well, it works, doesn't it?"

One mark of the professional is the acceptance of certain standards. In consideration of the safety and efficiency of our motive power and rolling stock, standards established many years ago by both railroads and government agencies are brushed aside . . . "It'll be OK." OK until the air and handbrakes fail and the train takes off downhill, or the blow-down valve pops out of the side of the firebox sheet because the threads were so worn they wouldn't hold, or the diaphragms between coaches weren't connected because it wasn't deemed necessary and a passenger gets an arm smashed rounding a curve? Relegating professional standards to the sideline always proves expensive in life, limb, money, and image.

Professionalism covers many areas in our industry. Mechanical and safety standards, though not always noticeable to the public, always reveal themselves to an inspector or fellow professional. Aesthetics are revealed to one and all. The public is the least discriminating; more choosy is the professional who looks for quality of workmanship; and, to make a distinction between a professional and the professionals' professional, i.e. one who has good taste, there exists the educated historian. He is one who recognizes

proper historical restoration: correct paint color and trim, returning physical structure to its original design, knowledge of procedures and techniques used at the time of the original construction of the artifact. We are all aware of several gross examples of poor taste in our industry. There are operations that paint rivets silver, work up fake sheetmetal smokestacks (always of the funnel or balloon type) to age their engines, apply long wooden "cowcatchers" to the front end of 1949 Porter 0-4-0's, or name their railroads after airborne Hollanders or singing canaries. Others use wild color schemes, fake Indian or outlaw raids, historically inaccurate descriptive brochures, etc. Let me make it clear that these things can be done in a professional manner though they lack good taste and class.

In all areas of operations professionalism is necessary. From selling tickets, to operating the train safely and on time, to keeping the grass and flowers around the depot neat and clean, and making sure that there is toilet paper in the bathroom . . . these factors all contribute to a professional operation.

It is to be admitted that doing something in a thoroughly professional and proper manner is initially more costly than doing it as cheaply or quickly as possible. Often the cheap patch job is only temporary or insufficient and must be done over anyway. I firmly believe that doing something right the first time is always the cheapest in the long run.

Many of us have the compulsion to collect things on a quantity basis rather than for quality. As a result many of our railroad museums look like junk yards. It is so much nicer to have a few select pieces of equipment, all in top operating and visual order, than a lineup of hulks.

If we are ever to grow up as an industry we will have to shed the mantle of hobbyist and don the cloak of professional. Only then will we be able to attract the proper attention and possibly catch the eye of the "big money people."

DAVID KRALL
Sauk Trail Line

ABOUT THE COVER: No, it's not the 'Freedom Train' stalled with a blown-flue; it's old #328, the Stillwater, Minn. display engine during a recent full display inspection by MTM crews under the direction of executive V.P. John Larkin. Shown peering from the smoke box of #328 is an equally smoky MTM'r Steve Glischinski. The engine was cleaned, inspected and subjected to a water pressure test by MTM in cooperation with the city of Stillwater to determine if the ex-NP engine on outside display for almost 20 years-- could be restored to operating condition. Considering that the engine has not turned a wheel for decades, and has been through several St. Croix floods, it is in amazing good shape, reports Larkin. The engine's firebox apparently redone shortly before #328 was retired is very sound. Also, the soot & grime is intact. It took the MTM inspection crew--consisting of Larkin, Glischinski, Bob Clark, Bob Renz and Bill Cordes, one-half hour to wash up when they returned home! pix courtesy Loren Martin-----

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING OCTOBER 14, 1975

The Fall general membership meeting of the Museum will be held in the community room of the Northwestern National Life Insurance Co. on Tuesday, October 14th, starting at 8 o'clock sharp. The general program will feature two motion pictures on Swiss railroading; titled 'Railroad Magic' and 'Spotlight on Swiss Lines.' This promises to be a perfect meeting to which each member can bring a guest who might have an interest in smart railroading as well as truly fantastic scenery.

The Northwestern National Life Building is located on So. Washington Ave. at the foot of the Nicollet Mall in Mpls. Ample parking can be found at the rear of the building. Plan to attend on the 14th of October.

The President's Message - by George Isaacs

As you by now have already noted, your leader and chief litter gatherer has borrowed this issue's lead message for a "comment" by David Krall which was printed in the recent issue of 'Trainline' published by the Tourist Railroad Association. Its a straightforward and timely question. Where do we stand?

NORTHERN EXTENSION PROPOSAL SENT TO PARK BOARD

The tentative alignment plan shown on the following pages is an integral part of a comprehensive proposal submitted to the Mpls. Park & Recreation Board during the latter part of August. Included in this proposal was a specific request for permission to begin work this fall. By the time you read this, it will be known whether we were or were not successful in our efforts. If the plan is approved by the Park Board and if the Museum is granted permission by the City of Minneapolis to cross Richfield Rd. with a signal protected crossing, the total length of trackage will increase to 4700 feet. In short, this means that before we can offer proper service over this greatly increased distance, we will absolutely need our second car in full operation; our track extension work and car restoration work must proceed apace! The last portion of the MTM's August proposal also outlined the vital necessity for an additional carbarn and a turntable at the south end of the Como-Harriet Line.

President's Message cont.

The Museum is most appreciative of the efforts of Gary Neunsinger, Ken Snyder and Bill Marshall for their survey work and the resulting drawings which were the essence of the MTM August proposal.

If any member has questions on either the northern extension or the proposed new carbarn, please feel free to contact George Isaacs at 484-7512.

Coming----1976 MTM Elections

Active members of the Minnesota Transportation Museum who wish to serve on the Board of Directors and who are willing to work toward carrying out the responsibilities associated with the office to which they aspire, are asked to contact the MTM nominating committee.

Members of the committee are:

Ted Kane 929-1580
Judy Sandberg 890-2830
Chas. Chotkowski 533-4622

FREEDOM TRAIN ARRIVES

It can best be described as an absolute 'madhouse' (which may be slightly on the conservative side) when the 25 car Freedom Train drawn by ex-Southern Pacific Daylight 4-8-4, #4449, rolled into Minnehaha over Milwaukee Trackage adjacent to the venerable MTM/MHS Minnehaha Depot. People were literally everywhere; lining the tracks, on the tracks and but for the intercession of Providence, almost under the tracks, in a few cases. It was overwhelming!

The Freedom Train, featuring 10 cars, filled with over 700 pieces of Americana from the early formative years of the National experience, made Mpls.-St. Paul its 27th stopover on its yearlong criss-cross run across America which is estimated to draw almost 8 million visitors. The consist was on display at Minnehaha Park from August 26th thru August 30th. MTM'ers manned the Minnehaha Depot in conjunction with the train's stay and MTM member Ray Benson reports that the Museum did a brisk business in MTM postcards, memorabilia etc. Visitors poured through the building all day long, each day. Our hats are off to those long-suffering members who worked so long and hard to serve the public during this great event. (And, we might add, presented the Minnesota Transportation Museum to that public in a most favorable manner.)

On August 31st, the Milwaukee delivered the Freedom Train to the BN at Dayton's Bluff for departure to Fargo, N.D. A diesel helper was required up the hill to Snelling Ave. Water stops were made at Willmar and Breckenridge with arrival in Fargo about 1:00 p.m. for display adjacent to the West Acres Shopping Center in West Fargo.

On September 5th, the BN will again handle the train to leave Fargo about 6 a.m. with water stops at Staples and St. Cloud or Elk River with an arrival at Mpls Northtown Yard about 1:00 p.m. After servicing, the train will be delivered to CNW for their handling to Sheldon, Ia. The Northwestern expects to run the train south that afternoon, probably to Mankato. After crews rest, the train will continue to Sheldon for delivery to the MILW and the short run to Sioux Falls, S.D. Arrival at Sioux Falls will be in the morning.

So, it's hail and farewell to the Red, White & Blue American Freedom Train, but not soon forgotten---especially that beautifully groomed SP 4-8-4. Daylight locomotive.

For thousands, it was a grand sight to witness; the magnificence of live steam after so long an absence.

SUMMER OF '75 COMO HARRIET OPERATIONS -by Frank Sandberg

The total ridership for regularly scheduled C-H operations through Sunday, Aug. 10, 1975, was 27,520. This number represents a 14.7% decrease in ridership from the corresponding period during 1974. There is ample reason for optimism, however, because at one point earlier in the season we were nearly 30% behind last year. Since that 'low point' was reached, both the weather and our ridership have steadily improved! And, with continued good weather for the balance of the season, we should have little problem breaking the 40,000 passenger mark for the forth consecutive year. Our 1975 season will officially come to a close on Sunday, Oct. 26th, 1975.

Charter operations this season have totalled more than 40 hours and have generated many, many dollars of much needed income; representing fully one/eighth of our total C.H.S.L. annual revenues. A very special vote of thanks goes to 'my better half' (Judy) for co-ordinating and scheduling all of this years '75 charter runs, including Minneapolis Public Schools, Senior Citizens groups, and most recently, a commercial photographic charter for the County Seat Stores. Her efforts have surely preserved my sanity!

On the other end of town-----

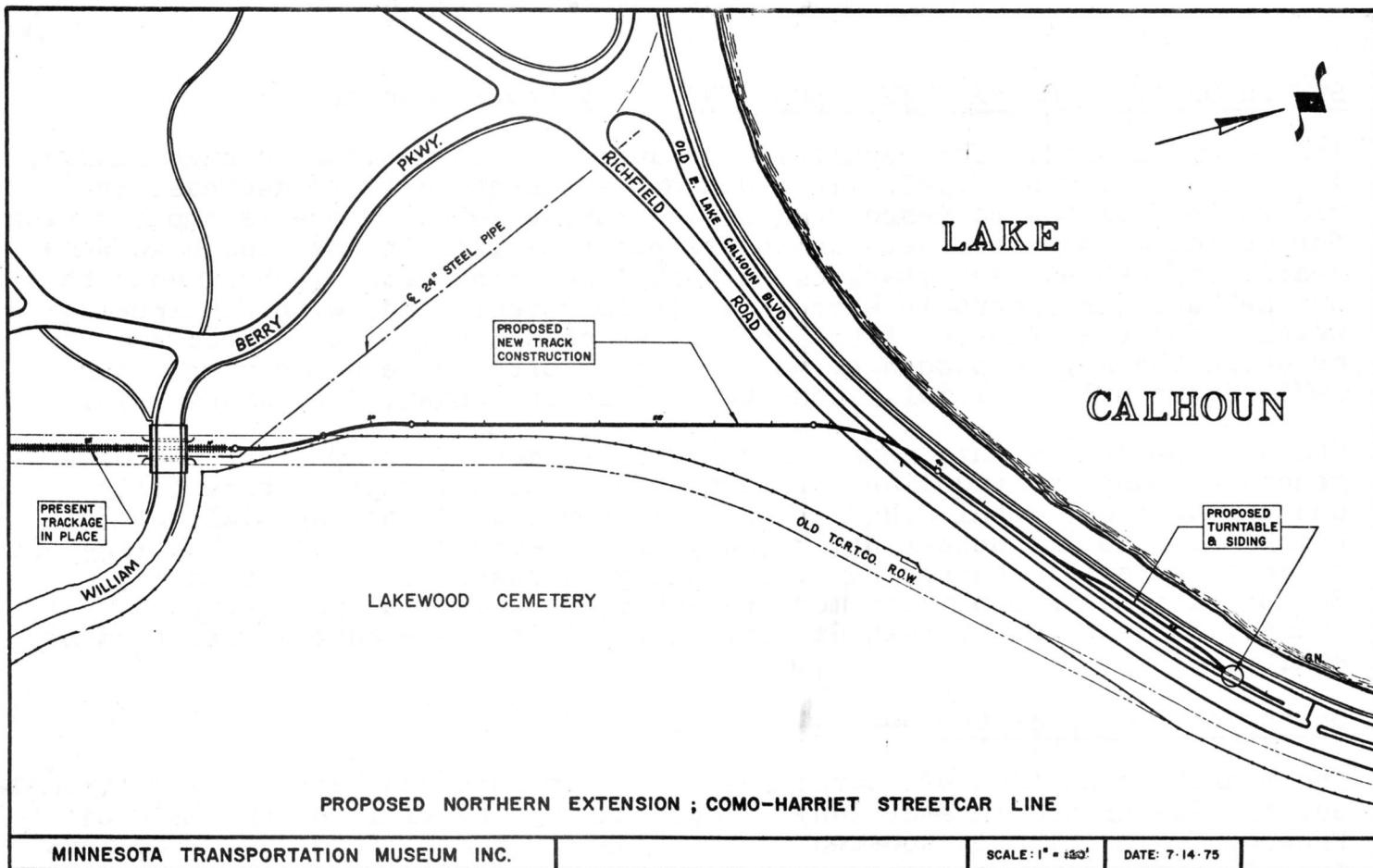
The Minnehaha Station of course has been open each and every Sunday throughout the summer and in addition, is open during the visit of the American Freedom Train which is spotted on the adjacent track, from Aug. 26th thru Aug. 30. The depot hasn't seen this kind of 'traffic' in many, many decades!

And, a word about safety. There still seems to be the tendency for certain operators to move across the 42nd St. crossing at an uncomfortable speed. We have had several close calls this year in both directions. When backing over 42nd St. from the station area, the front operator should gradually open the controller, reaching the fifth (5th) notch only when the car is approximately centered on 42nd St. This will eliminate the 'sling-shot' back-up acceleration and give the rear operator more time to react in the event of an emergency. When proceeding forward over the crossing, the maximum speed of 5 mph will always be used. Make no mistake, pedestrians will walk right in front of you, flagman or no. The operator must be able to stop, Period. There is no second chance!

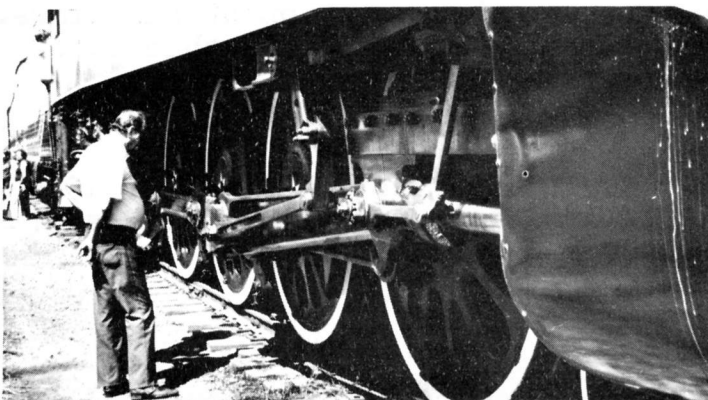
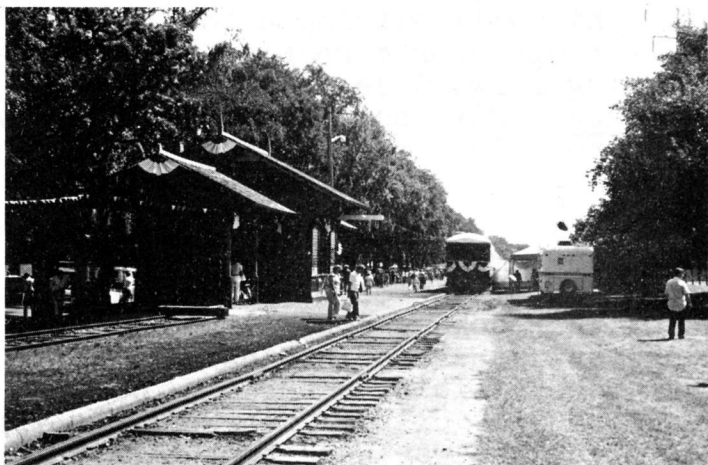
As most of you have noticed, we have installed temporary back-up lights which are reasonably well hidden under the rear of the car. The on/off switch is located on the right hand side of the back-up control box. These lights were not installed to extend our operating period into darkness. They are intended however, to make the car more visible on the one or two trips which are generally made during dusk; to provide some rearward running lights which the car did not have, and to light the way back to the car barn after that one last trip, which always seems so irresistible to some of us. Always remember to use good judgement and to exercise caution at all times. My thanks to all the operators and foremen for giving their valuable time to assure our successful operations this season.

REMINDER!

The 1976 "Train Convention" is coming our way! Oct. 31st - Nov. 1st, 1976 MTM will host this National Tourist Railway Association group. Get Ready! Train's A'comin!



ABOVE: The CHSL Northern extension plan as recently submitted to the Mpls. Park Board. (Not shown to scale.) BELOW: Scenes from the visit of American Freedom Train at Minnehaha Park.





MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM

PO Box 16509
Minneapolis, MN 55416-0509
www.TrolleyRide.org

August 2021

Pursuant to board action at the August 5, 2021 meeting of the board of directors and in honor of the 50th anniversary of operation of the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line the attached materials are being republished by the Minnesota Streetcar Museum under the under the Creative Commons "Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International" and "Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported" licenses. You may choose either license as suited for your needs. In particular, the 3.0 license is meant to be compatible with the Wikipedia project.

In general, these licenses will allow you to freely:

- **Share** — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format
- **Adapt** — remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially.

Under the following terms:

- **Attribution** — You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.
 - **Please credit the *Minnesota Streetcar Museum* and provide our URL www.trolleyride.org** We would also appreciate hearing about your re-use of our materials though that is not a requirement of the license.
- **ShareAlike** — If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original.
- **No additional restrictions** — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits.

You do not have to comply with the license for elements of the material in the public domain or where your use is permitted by an applicable exception or limitation.

No warranties are given. The license may not give you all of the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material.

Please review these licenses at the Creative Commons site for full legal code and details on allowed uses:

- Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International:
 - <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/legalcode>
- Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported
 - <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/legalcode>

If these licenses are not appropriate for your needs, for example you want to use the material commercially without crediting us or do not want to share your contributions under the same license please reach out to us for other options.

We Make Minnesota's Electric Railway History Come Alive!